

Public Safety

COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF CRIME

THE OUTCOME

Citizens' sense of community safety

THE MEASUREMENT

A general citizen survey to measure how safe people feel in their community.

WHAT THE DATA MEANS

Many factors influence citizens' sense of safety in a community. Some of these factors include the media, current events including high profile crime cases, the age distribution in a community, neighborhood lighting, gender, city size, perception of police responsiveness, level of knowledge regarding neighborhood crime, and personal experiences.

DEPARTMENTS INVOLVED

Police

BENCHMARK

The benchmark for community sense of safety is the ICMA "Citizen Rating of Safety in Their Neighborhoods" for cities with a population under 100,000. Although ICMA uses a four-category response (very unsafe, somewhat safe, reasonably safe, and very safe), the City's survey consultants recommended using an 11-point scale for increased accuracy. Carlsbad used responses of 9 or 10 on a 0 through 10-point scale (0 – not safe at all; 10 – very safe) for the "very safe" category.

RESULTS

How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood during the day?

PERCENT RESPONDING "VERY SAFE"

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
CARLSBAD	86%	87%	87%	88%	N/A	85%	86%
BENCHMARK	62%	64%	67%	66%	N/A	57%	Data Pending
AVERAGE	9.5	9.6	9.6	9.5	N/A	9.4	9.5

How safe do you feel walking alone in your neighborhood at night?

PERCENT RESPONDING "VERY SAFE"

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
CARLSBAD	41%	43%	39%	43%	N/A	44%	42%
BENCHMARK	31%	33%	37%	35%	N/A	45%	<i>Data Pending</i>
AVERAGE	7.5	7.6	7.6	7.8	N/A	7.8	7.7

ANALYSIS

Carlsbad's ratings have been consistent for the past six years and are generally higher than the benchmark. Benchmark data is not yet available from ICMA but review of prior years' data shows that Carlsbad is consistently close to or above the benchmark.

In looking at the safety survey responses, differences were found in the ratings of daytime safety based on whether or not respondents owned their home. Renters gave somewhat lower ratings for daytime safety (9.16) than did home owners (9.54). No other significant differences in the 2006 daytime safety ratings were found when comparisons were made based on age, location of residence, length of residence, household income, presence of children in the household and household size.

ACTION PLAN

The department will continue to monitor this measure and research factors that affect one's sense of community safety.

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